

**CHAPTER**  
**14**  
**SECTION 2****EXTEND WORKSHEET****The Executive Powers****3, 4**

## Researching Presidential Appointees

The process of appointing and confirming a top-ranking officer of the Federal Government is never taken lightly. The individuals who are appointed by the President have tremendous responsibilities, such as administering public policy, representing the nation in foreign countries, and interpreting the Constitution. Making sure that the most qualified person is placed in each of these positions is an extremely important task, and an arduous one.

Although a presidential appointment is an honor, the confirmation process is not easy for the nominee. Every element of the nominee's personal and professional life is vulnerable to scrutiny by Congress and, to a large degree, by the press. For this reason, many qualified individuals are unwilling to accept a presidential appointment. Those who do accept an appointment know that they are in for a difficult yet potentially rewarding ride.

Select a high-level position that interests you, such as a Cabinet head, an ambassador to a specific country, or a Supreme Court justice. Conduct research on a recent presidential nominee for that position and create a timeline showing the events from that person's nomination to confirmation (or rejection). Use the questions below to help guide you in your research. After you have completed your timeline, answer the Reflection Questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. When was the nominee selected by the President?
2. What experience did the President highlight when he or she nominated the person?
3. When did the nominee come before the Senate committee?
4. What issues arose during the hearings? If any proved problematic, what were they? Were they personal or professional?
5. Was there media coverage at the hearings? If so, what effect did the media have on the hearings?
6. When did the Senate committee vote on the nominee, and what was the result?
7. When did the full Senate hold its debate on the nominee, and how long did the debate last?
8. What was the result of the debate?
9. Was the nominee confirmed or rejected—or did he or she simply drop out?
10. If the nominee was confirmed, did the President hold a press conference?

### Reflection Questions

1. What recommendations would you make for improving the confirmation process?
2. Do you think the process deters the best candidates for many positions? Explain.